

Appendix Listing Of Actions

This appendix provides a summary of the actions recommended in the preceeding report. The actions are listed in the order of the topic heading under which they appear in the text. In addition to a tracking number, each action has a two-letter code, which refers to the team on the Customer Service Task Force that developed the recommendation (see list of abbreviations below).

Team Abbreviation	Team Title
<i>CM</i>	Communications
<i>CI</i>	Customer Interaction
<i>CF</i>	Customer Focus
<i>FP</i>	Filing and Payment
<i>HP</i>	Human Potential
<i>MS</i>	Measures
<i>NC</i>	Notices and Correspondence
<i>SB</i>	Small Business

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
II. A New Direction For Service	
II.a. Simplify Forms, Notices and Correspondence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Plain, Clear And Courteous Language 	
<i>NC01.1</i>	By 1999, rewrite in plain language the most frequently used notices, like those for late payment or mathematical errors. These notices will be released only after they are tested for clarity and acceptance by taxpayers who do not have accounting or tax law expertise.
<i>NC01.3</i>	Work with the National Performance Review's Plain Language Team to rewrite the "top 10 worst offenders" by the end of 1997.
<i>NC03.1</i>	Immediately review and carry out all appropriate recommendations contained in a 1990 IRS study of correspondence — for example requiring that all non-computer-generated notices and letters contain the signature and telephone number of the employee who will be working on the account.
<i>NC03.2</i>	Review past records of incoming customer correspondence.
<i>NC03.3</i>	Determine which categories could be better handled by making a telephone call, rather than writing a letter, and make recommended changes.
<i>NC03.4</i>	Standardize the format and content of written responses, using appropriate commercial computer software.
<i>CM01.1</i>	Redesign the most important forms and publications, focusing on clarity and ease of use.
<i>CM01.2</i>	By 2000, rewrite the basic 1040 instruction package and test it for clarity on people who do not have tax law or accounting backgrounds.
<i>CM01.4</i>	Acknowledge the communications it receives from the taxpayers about problems and apologize when it makes a mistake.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate Unnecessary Notices And Contact With The IRS 	
<i>NC02.5</i>	By the end of 1998, eliminate additional low value notices. This will eliminate more than 45 million pieces of mail annually, almost one-third of the total number of notices the IRS has been sending to taxpayers.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>NC02.9</i>	Review all relevant information to determine if the dollar tolerance level at which notices are issued can be increased.
<i>NC02.10</i>	Coordinate with Internal Audit , Compliance Research, and Customer Service to determine if IRS has collected any data to support or negate the proposal to increase the dollar level at which notices are issued.
<i>FP01.1</i>	In 1998 step up its efforts to inform the nearly two million older and lower-income taxpayers who are currently filing federal tax returns aware that they don't need to do so, saving the taxpayers and the IRS time and money.
<i>FP02.1</i>	Study doing away with the requirement to file Form 4868, Application of Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, except when a payment is due.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor Communication To Customers 	
<i>CM04.1</i>	Tailor publications and products more closely to the needs of customers.
<i>CM04.2</i>	During 1999, create easy-to-read brochures to provide important information on tax benefits and obligations when and where taxpayers need it, such as at banks or realty companies during the process of purchasing a home.
<i>CM03.1</i>	Improve and expand the availability of tax products and information in Spanish.
<i>CM03.2</i>	Expand availability of tax products and information in languages other than English and Spanish, as appropriate.
<i>CM01.3</i>	Ensure prompt distribution about new tax laws and other issues to employees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvent How Notices Are Managed 	
<i>NC02.1</i>	Map the pattern of when and how notices are issued.
<i>NC02.2</i>	Merge notice issuance pattern data with telephone performance data.
<i>NC02.3</i>	Identify the impact of notice issuance patterns on telephone performance.
<i>NC02.4</i>	Integrate changes to notice issuance processes into overall network management, call routing, forecasting and scheduling system.
<i>NC02.6</i>	Adjust the notice issuance pattern from peak to non-peak periods.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>NC02.7</i>	Determine which notices direct customers to telephone numbers where the issue cannot be resolved on-line.
<i>NC02.8</i>	Flatten the notice issuance pattern throughout each tax year.
<i>NC02.13</i>	Establish a new full-time position of a “notices gatekeeper,” who will have the authority and accountability to manage the entire notice process.
<i>NC02.14</i>	The responsibilities of the gatekeeper should include adherence to IRS policies regarding the use, generation, and mailing of corporate notices.
<i>NC02.15</i>	Link gatekeeper responsibility with the automated call routing capability.
<i>NC02.16</i>	Make the gatekeeper responsible for providing input into the standard-setting for new notices.
<i>NC02.17</i>	Empower the notice gatekeeper to be responsible for alerting all customer service assistors, walk-in managers and customer advocates about any new, irregular, or problem notices.
<i>NC02.18</i>	Institute an improved “early warning system,” so that the IRS can notify tax preparers and others promptly when problem notices are generated and mailed.
<i>NC01.2</i>	Determine the appropriate software solution to create rewritten notices, and merge them with the appropriate account data.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward The Mail
<i>NC04.1</i>	Track returned and undelivered mail, review current procedures for handling it, and determine precisely how much this process costs the IRS.
<i>NC04.2</i>	Examine the legal issues involved in using third-party change of address information and, if necessary, propose legislation to allow the use of this information to update taxpayer accounts.
<i>NC04.3</i>	Develop procedures for getting change of address information from taxpayers over the telephone or from a third-party source such as the U.S. Postal Service.
<i>NC04.4</i>	Explore using the U.S. Postal Service’s existing change of address mechanisms to ensure that IRS mail is forwarded to the right addresses.
<i>NC04.5</i>	After developing a system for electronically updating addresses in its computer files, the IRS should install and maintain the system.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
	II.b. Provide Better Telephone Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Telephone Services 24 Hours A Day, Seven Days A Week
<i>CI01.2</i>	By January 1, 1998, expand telephone service to 6 days a week, 16 hours a day. By January 1, 1999, expand telephone services to 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
<i>CI01.4</i>	Use multiple strategies to reduce demand on the telephone lines such as educating customers on when to expect refunds.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Service With Modern Technology
<i>CI01.7</i>	Over the long term the IRS Modernization Blueprint will improve assistance to customers by making accurate, electronically accessible and up-to-the-minute information available to authorized employees.
<i>CI01.8</i>	In 1999, take steps to make TeleTax refund information system more reliable to help more taxpayers check on the status of their refunds over the phone.
<i>CI02.1</i>	Complete a study of why most people hang up when they use the automated menu and recommend needed modifications to current plans.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customize More Services To Meet Taxpayer Needs
<i>CI01.1</i>	In 1998, begin using new call routing technology to provide information that is geared to specific customer needs — such as the tax implications of the sale of a house, retirement or job change.
<i>CI01.3</i>	IRS notices should advise taxpayers the best time of day to call to discuss their particular type of question. The IRS should use its data systems to let the employees answering the telephone know when to expect these kinds of calls so that they are prepared to help.
<i>CI01.6</i>	Continue existing tax preparer telephone services. Provide a nationwide telephone service for tax preparers.
<i>CI03.12</i>	Conduct a study to determine if having only one toll-free telephone number is sufficient to meet customers needs.
<i>CI03.13</i>	Continue to provide specialized assistance to large corporations in the service centers.
<i>HP14.1</i>	To further improve the quality of phone service, the IRS should allow employees with multilingual skills to assist customers in Spanish and other languages.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
----------	-----------------------

II.c. Provide Better Face-To-Face Service

- **Expand Walk-In Services**

<i>CI04.2</i>	Beginning in 1998 open district offices on Saturdays during the busiest weekends of the filing season.
<i>CI04.3</i>	Expand the telephone information system so that people can find out when and where they can get face-to-face help.
<i>CI05.1</i>	Before closing a walk-in office, the IRS should create a plan for effective alternatives to serve customers.
<i>CI05.2</i>	If an office with walk-in services must close, the district should conduct a public media campaign to inform the public of the closure and where to seek help in the future.
<i>CI06.13</i>	Study the feasibility of extending audit appointments to include evenings and weekends for the convenience of the customer.

- **Make Forms More Available**

<i>CM02.1</i>	Make expanded use of the Internet to meet taxpayer needs, supplementing current forms and publications with updated tax information.
<i>CM02.2</i>	Expand use of CD-ROMs to ensure that forms and publications are available in all walk-in offices. Make master versions of basic 1040 forms and tax tables available in copy stores and other locations where they can be photocopied.
<i>CM02.3</i>	Make more forms more available for those customers that do not use Internet, and publicize the location of forms to taxpayers.
<i>CI04.1</i>	Beginning in 1999, open additional temporary community-based locations during peak season to make publications and forms available in banks, libraries, shopping malls, and other locations.
<i>CI04.4</i>	Work with state and local tax agencies to establish "tax stores" — locations where forms and a range of other tax services can be provided.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
----------	-----------------------

II.d. Help Small Business

- **Help Start-Up Businesses**

<i>SB01.1</i>	Assist new employers who have just applied for a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) with information on relevant tax information where possible.
<i>SB01.2</i>	Beginning in 1998 team up with other federal agencies, financial institutions, tax preparers, state and local authorities and others to provide tax information, training and consultative services to small start-up businesses. These services are designed to make record keeping, filing and payment requirements as simple and easy as possible.
<i>SB02.2</i>	Create and make available to new businesses a start-up kit with multi-agency tax information.
<i>SB03.3</i>	Develop and publish clear, simple brochures giving tax tips on new obligations as businesses change — for example, when hiring employees, expanding the business, converting from a sole proprietorship to a partnership, incorporating, or shutting down.
<i>SB05.1</i>	Send a letter to business customers who have made first-time deposit errors to tell them if the penalty has been waived and to tell them how to avoid mistakes in making their next deposit.

- **Communicate More Clearly With Less Paper**

<i>SB03.1</i>	Develop a permanent method to seek feedback from small businesses about which forms, publications and specific line items are the most problematic.
<i>SB03.2</i>	Test new forms and publications for clarity with small business owners and employees.
<i>SB03.4</i>	Continue the development of EZ forms for incorporated businesses and other filing entities.
<i>SB04.2</i>	In 1998 expand the successful TeleFile program to let many small businesses to use their telephones to file Form 941 and report employment taxes.
<i>SB04.3</i>	Provide e-mail for small businesses to resolve tax account problems, once the IRS develops a way to protect the privacy of taxpayer information over e-mail.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
SB04.5	Seek a feasible no-cost solution to let small businesses use credit cards as a payment option for tax balances due.
SB05.3	Help and encourage small businesses to use the Electronic Federal Tax Payment Systems (EFTPS), conduct focus groups to get feedback on the system from small business customers and market the electronic system in ways that make clear how it can benefit small businesses.
SB08.1	Rewrite notices in a manner small business owners understand.
SB08.2	Identify notices that can be eliminated or sent less frequently.
SB08.3	Find ways to notify small business customers promptly if problem notices are generated and mailed.
SB08.5	Standardize the format and content of written responses to reduce inconsistencies in notices that are sent to small business customers.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Knowledgeable, Convenient Help
SB01.3	Partner with trade associations to provide timely, updated information specific to small businesses in a variety of industries through association newsletters, trade journals, web sites, and other communication systems.
SB07.1	By the 1999 tax season, provide small businesses with 24 hour a day phone assistance geared to their needs.
SB07.2	Seek to route telephone calls from small businesses to specific individuals who have training and the authority to answer business tax questions and resolve tax account problems.
SB07.3	Review the existing and proposed uses of IRS interactive voice response units to ensure that small business needs are met in a cost-effective manner.
SB07.4	Explore the use of telephone calls instead of written notices or letters.
SB08.4	Explore for new ways of communicating with the small businesses.
SB09.1	Improve communications with those small business customers who do not use English as their primary language by carrying out a multilingual strategy that includes written, face-to-face, and telephone communication.
SB09.2	Provide nationwide toll-free Spanish language telephone service for small business owners.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
SB09.3	Create forms, publications, notices and brochures in Spanish.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote One-Stop Service
SB02.1	Working in partnership with other small business stakeholders, make use of electronic tools, creating a Small Business Corner on the IRS Home Page, or provide one-stop information, education, and registration services to the small business community.
SB02.3	Develop a strategy to open more one-stop business assistance centers in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies.
SB04.1	To give small businesses a single point reporting of tax and wage data to meet the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, the Department of Labor, and state agencies, continue to work to support the Simplified Tax and Wage Reporting System program.
SB04.4	Promote further use of "joint installment agreements" for businesses that have federal and state tax liabilities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Businesses With Problems
SB04.2	Analyze the costs and benefits of handling of all Federal Tax Deposit penalties in one centralized location.
SB05.2	Test the use of specially trained employees to make educational telephone calls to new employers, and specifically to new employers when the IRS first discovers a mistake in handling their Federal Tax Deposits.
SB05.4	Work with payroll and accountant groups to help educate individuals who make deposits for small businesses.
SB05.5	Develop training materials and courses to educate IRS employees about deposit requirements, penalties and consistent use of reasonable cause provisions for waiving penalties.
SB05.6	Expand the approach of the Penalty Help Line developed in Kansas City if it proves to be an effective way to provide assistance to small businesses.
SB05.7	Test the use of outgoing telephone calls in lieu of written notices in certain potential penalty situations.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>SB05.8</i>	Work with troubled small businesses to help them comply, stay in business, and avoid future tax problems, expanding on successful pilot programs in California, Maine and elsewhere.
<i>SB06.1</i>	Study and make improvements regarding penalty administration for small businesses, including considering raising the threshold for forgiving penalties based on oral testimony.
II.e. Create A Problem Solving System That Works	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve Customer Problems In One Contact 	
<i>CI02.2</i>	Establish a process in every office that puts any run-around burden on the IRS, and removes it from the customer.
<i>CI02.3</i>	Ensure that there is sufficient technical staffing at the telephone numbers given to taxpayers for assistance on these “underreporter” notices, and find ways to overcome the barriers to resolving these cases by telephone.
<i>CI02.4</i>	In cases where issues could best be resolved in writing the IRS should specifically advise taxpayers on what information and documents they need to provide.
<i>CI02.5</i>	The IRS should develop and carry out a cost effective plan to expand the number of IRS assistance centers working on underreporter cases, again — where possible — using more telephone calls instead of written notices to resolve cases.
<i>CI03.1</i>	Working with NTEU, IRS should create more flexible job descriptions to better support the workload demand.
<i>CI03.2</i>	Conduct an analysis and develop plans to refine and improve its toll-free service.
<i>CI03.3</i>	Conduct an analysis to increase, or consistently define, what an IRS employee can resolve over the telephone. Do not place the 1-800-829-8815 number or notices that cannot be resolved by telephone.
<i>CI03.4</i>	Provide simplified, agency-wide guidance that spells out what kinds of cases employees are able to resolve over the telephone.
<i>CI03.5</i>	Continually revisit the guidelines to identify procedural changes or training needs.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>CI03.6</i>	Ensure an adequate supply of forms and materials are available to allow employees to do their jobs.
<i>CI03.7</i>	Ensure employees are properly and promptly informed on new information.
<i>CI03.8</i>	Ensure employees have access, when appropriate, to the multiple databases and systems needed to resolve customer issues in one contact.
<i>FP07.1</i>	Load all Non-Master File (NMF) accounts in one place and load them into a secure on-line data system to improve their accessibility.
<i>FP07.2</i>	Put currently uncollectible accounts in the automated Non-Master File, where appropriate.
<i>FP07.3</i>	Ensure that the special units in the service centers that service these accounts are properly staffed.
<i>FP07.4</i>	To reach a long-term solution, the Modernization Blueprint calls for the consolidation of all accounts into a new unified system.
<i>FP03.1</i>	Emphasize to all employees the need to honor all valid Powers of Attorney, and to process them promptly.
<i>FP03.2</i>	Improve training on Powers of Attorney.
<i>FP03.3</i>	Establish telephone assistance service centers for authorizations.
<i>FP03.4</i>	Expedite input from locations that do not process authorizations by faxing them to sites that process them.
<i>FP03.5</i>	Draft regulations for acceptance of oral tax information authorizations.
<i>FP03.6</i>	Give all locations the ability to input authorizations and hold the person receiving the authorization responsible for assuring input.
<i>FP03.8</i>	Accept oral tax information authorizations.
<i>FP03.9</i>	Establish a centralized computer database to speed authorizations.
<i>FP03.10</i>	Accept electronic authorizations and record them immediately while meeting privacy and security requirements.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make It Easy For People To Get Problems Solved
<i>CI07.1</i>	Beginning on November 15, 1997, institute monthly "IRS Problem Solving Days" in every district where employees will meet with taxpayers to hear and resolve problems.
<i>FP11.1</i>	Implement a policy that will allow District Directors to approve and issue emergency tax refunds to customers in one business day.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track And Use Data On Complaints
<i>FP06.1</i>	Beginning immediately, using the Taxpayer Advocate's Problem Resolution Information System (PROMIS), the IRS should track complaints.
<i>FP06.2</i>	Set up a system that systematically raises the priority of cases which have not been addressed to ensure that the appropriate management level is involved.
<i>CI07.2</i>	When any complaint is unresolved after a reasonable period of time, reassign the case to the next higher management level.
<i>FP03.7</i>	Design a system to ensure that individual employees and managers are held accountable for the fair and speedy resolution of problems.
<i>HP13.3</i>	The Taxpayer Advocate should develop a process to identify solutions to systemic problems identified by taxpayers. These solutions should be brought to the attention of the Commissioner when necessary.
II.f. Prepare For A Paperless Future	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade Technology To Improve Customer Service
<i>CI01.7</i>	The IRS Modernization Blueprint will improve assistance to customers by making accurate, electronically accessible and up-to-the-minute information available on taxpayer returns and accounts while protecting taxpayer privacy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer More Electronic Filing Options
<i>FP09.1</i>	Solicit ideas from private industry and tax practitioners to increase the use of electronic filing.
<i>FP09.2</i>	By 1998, the IRS should increase by 3 million, or about 10%, the number of taxpayers who are eligible to use TeleFile — the telephone filing system.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>FP09.3</i>	Extend TeleFile for businesses to allow small companies to meet federal tax deposit reporting requirements over the phone.
<i>FP09.4</i>	In 1998 increase the number of forms that can be filed electronically and educate customers about the benefits of electronic filing — fewer hassles, fewer contacts with the IRS and faster refunds.
<i>FP09.5</i>	Market TeleFile aggressively to individual taxpayers.
<i>FP09.6</i>	Conduct extensive market research to find out how electronic filing can better meet customer needs.
<i>FP09.7</i>	In 1999, the IRS should work to enable taxpayers to file paperless by eliminating the need for mailing in W-2s and other forms and for paper signatures.
<i>FP09.9</i>	Use information from private industry and tax practitioners as a basis for new services.
<i>FP09.10</i>	Allow taxpayers to resolve tax questions by e-mail without jeopardizing taxpayer privacy.
<i>FP09.11</i>	Offer tax practitioners the option of filing an electronic Power of Attorney for their clients.
<i>NC02.11</i>	Determine the feasibility of issuing notices electronically — test and implement.
<i>NC02.12</i>	Re-examine the work on filing and notices previously completed to determine current usability.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce New Payment Options
<i>FP09.8</i>	For the first time, beginning in 1999 taxpayers who file their returns electronically will be able to pay their taxes with a direct withdrawal from their bank accounts.
<i>FP09.12</i>	Offer credit card payment for balances due. Seek credit industry partners to pilot-test credit cards for taxpayers who file electronically in 1999.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote One-Stop Service On A World Class Web Site On The Internet
<i>FP09.13</i>	The IRS should continue to improve and promote the use of the Internet to provide new services and products.
III. A Customer Service Revolution	
III.a. Treat Taxpayers As Customers	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead The Way
<i>HP11.1</i>	Empower front-line managers to approve employees' suggestions, but a "no" needs to be referred to the next level of management and to the Ideas Advocate.
<i>HP11.2</i>	Allow employees who have been trained to answer a customer's inquiry, to answer that question whether assigned to that specific issue or not.
<i>HP11.3</i>	IRS leadership should review and remove barriers, including organizational and structural obstacles, that prevent effective job performance.
<i>HP18.1</i>	Establish a uniform set of leadership competencies for all levels of management.
<i>HP18.2</i>	IRS managers from the Commissioner on down should spend time each year serving customers directly.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build A System That Focuses On Customers
<i>CF02</i>	Collect data that will help the IRS understand the particular needs of customer segments and their key life events.
<i>CF03</i>	Any realignment of the IRS organization should include an emphasis on excellent customer service.
<i>CF04</i>	Develop a measurement and performance system that regularly obtains and uses customer input.

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>HP10.1</i>	Create a long-term program to make the IRS culture more customer-friendly. Engage the entire IRS workforce at all levels; challenge long-held values and beliefs about how the organization works and carries out its mission; and hold the IRS and its employees accountable for providing excellent customer service.
<i>HP10.2</i>	Use four fundamental strategies: (1) establish and write out a clear mission statement to guide the bureau; (2) create executive and management buy-in; (3) align the organization's policies, procedures, systems, and structures to support employees as they work toward the accomplishment of the new purpose; and (4) gain the commitment of all members of the workforce.
<i>HP10.3</i>	Manage implementation of the cultural change through methods identified in the plan.
<i>HP13.1</i>	Continue benchmarking with industry and other government agencies and establish a means to institutionalize best practices within the IRS.
<i>CM06.1</i>	Communicate early successes in program and policy changes throughout the organization.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Changes In The Tax Code
<i>FP05.1</i>	Identify provisions of the Internal Revenue Code requiring improvement or simplification, consistent with other important tax policy goals — including considerations of fairness, equity, economic efficiency, progressiveness and revenue collection.
<i>FP05.2</i>	Maintain ongoing communication with the Treasury Department to identify existing Code provisions that are sources of significant compliance or administrative burdens for taxpayers or the IRS and develop proposals for reducing these burdens.
<i>FP05.3</i>	Work with private sector groups, such as bar associations, professional tax associations and academic groups, to identify and develop proposals to forward to the Treasury Department to improve and simplify the Code.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop A New Mission Statement
<i>CF01</i>	Develop a simpler and more focused mission statement that commits to serve taxpayers as customers.
<i>FP08.1</i>	Make checks payable to the United States Treasury instead of the Internal Revenue Service.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
III.b. Ensure Fair Treatment For Taxpayers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help Taxpayers Get It Right 	
<i>CI06.1</i>	Continue to support existing research and analysis programs in district offices and the data models at the heart of the compliance research database.
<i>CI06.2</i>	Where appropriate, expand prevention strategies to other districts such as the approach tested by the North Florida District Office of Research and Analysis.
<i>CI06.3</i>	Continue to support the development of research database and models.
<i>CI06.4</i>	Test and roll out the Electronic Transcript Delivery System to help people get the right information from the IRS when they need it.
<i>CI06.5</i>	Develop a transition plan to improve compliance.
<i>CI06.6</i>	Find a way for IRS districts to share effective compliance improvement strategies more easily.
<i>CI06.7</i>	Implement a new internal measurement system, the Alternative Treatment Revenue Measure, to give districts credit for results from these new compliance strategies.
<i>CI06.8</i>	Implement a Strategic Compliance Planning Model (SCPM) to allocate resources to areas which have successfully improved compliance.
<i>CI06.9</i>	Begin to move additional workload “upstream” in the compliance process to reduce costs and to resolve customer account problems sooner.
<i>CI06.10</i>	Test new workload selection criteria.
<i>CI06.11</i>	Include new workload selection criteria in its modernization program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Fair, Consistent Treatment 	
<i>CI06.12</i>	Develop an automated database to record, analyze and use national appeals data to promote fair treatment in appeals.
<i>FP04.1</i>	The organization should undertake a comprehensive review of the fairness and effectiveness of all penalties, report to Congress and make recommendations for legislative changes.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>FP04.3</i>	Consider raising the current administrative threshold giving IRS employees expanded authority to eliminate or reduce penalties on the spot, during first contacts with taxpayers and based on oral testimony.
III.c. Measure What You Want To Get	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create A Balanced Scorecard 	
<i>MS01</i>	Effective immediately, the IRS will ban measures such as using enforcement activities to rank districts and assigning dollar goals for districts and service centers.
<i>MS02</i>	Work with the NTEU to design and test a balanced scorecard to evaluate the IRS and its employees in 1998. The scorecard will rate performance on: (1) customer service; (2) employee satisfaction; and (3) business results.
<i>MS02.1</i>	Link balanced scorecard on direct customer feedback, including an annual independent survey of customers.
<i>MS02.2</i>	Link the balanced scorecard on input from employees in an annual employee survey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure Performance On The Right Things 	
<i>MS03.1</i>	Put in place standards which clearly describe expectations for business results, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.
<i>MS02.3</i>	Revise critical evaluation elements and the reward structure for employees, to reflect a balanced measurement system. Start with executives and managers.
<i>HP05.1</i>	Establish specific customer service expectations for individuals in key, high-level, high-visibility positions.
<i>HP05.2</i>	Establish specific standards for customer service in every IRS manager's performance plan.
<i>HP06.1</i>	Rewrite critical job elements for all customer service representatives.
<i>HP06.2</i>	Rewrite the critical job elements, for all occupations, especially those dealing directly with the public.
<i>HP07.1</i>	Move from individual rewards for performance to a system that rewards the members of the organization for successful team efforts.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>HP07.2</i>	Develop a revised system of measures that goes beyond the agency's current emphasis on individual productivity.
<i>HP07.3</i>	Individual special act awards should be focused on excellence in competencies and customer service.
<i>HP03.1</i>	Set up a competency-based pass/fail appraisal system.
<i>HP03.2</i>	Replace the current evaluation process with one that promotes on-going learning, counseling and training geared to individual needs.
<i>HP03.3</i>	Separate individual appraisals from awards, although both should remain focused on excellence.
<i>HP04.1</i>	Evaluate the merit of pursuing pay system changes in the future.
<i>HP16.1</i>	Managers and executives at all levels must support efforts to reward and recognize employee contributions toward better customer service.
<i>HP16.2</i>	Implement such awards as: peer customer service award; extra mile award; practitioner's award; outstanding customer service manager; outstanding customer service employee; single biggest customer service contribution; and, outstanding field executive for customer service excellence.

III.d. Help Employees Serve Customers

• **Give Employees The Tools They Need To Do Their Jobs**

<i>HP09.1</i>	Expand work on the Electronic Performance Support System being developed by the Electronic Performance Support System Institute to give employees access to tax law information.
<i>HP09.2</i>	Determine the needs of customer service representatives and incorporate into the Modernization Blueprint.
<i>HP09.3</i>	Create and deploy the first generation of performance support technology specifically directed at serving customers.
<i>HP09.4</i>	Expand electronic performance support systems within the customer service departments and across the entire IRS organization.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE
Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>HP09.5</i>	Incorporate desktop performance support tools into the Modernization Blueprint.
<i>HP09.6</i>	Build additional applications targeted to customer needs.
<i>HP09.7</i>	Ensure that all applications and systems designs at this stage are performance-centered and integrated with the business system.
<i>HP13.4</i>	As it carries out the Modernization Blueprint, ensure that all employees who deal with the public have electronic tools on their desks as their primary source of information and technical support.
<i>HP02.8</i>	Use the planned "Modernization" infrastructure to deliver employee performance assistance methods and training capabilities to each employee's desktop, whenever possible.
<i>CI03.9</i>	Provide employees with access to fax machines, where possible, so that they can send forms and other information to customers.
<i>CI03.10</i>	Continue to ask employees for ideas on how automation could improve operations.
<i>CI03.11</i>	Review the need to improve employees' immediate workstations to better service their customers.

• **Reinvent Training For Better Customer Service**

<i>HP02.1</i>	Create a skills bank that identifies the skills of its employees.
<i>HP02.2</i>	Close the gap between IRS's business needs and skills possessed by employees.
<i>HP02.3</i>	Change the internal listing of required employee skills to place greater emphasis on skills needed for customer service. Assess the skills of IRS employees and match their skills to jobs.
<i>HP02.4</i>	Assess the skills of its employees and train those with the most critical needs.
<i>HP02.5</i>	Train additional employees with critical skills needs.
<i>HP02.6</i>	Set a goal of achieving core customer service skills that are higher than the national average for business.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
HP02.7	Begin annual reviews of gaps between employee skills and organizational requirements.
HP08.1	Make interactive video training the major training delivery system for all employees and other large-employee-group training subjects.
HP08.2	Use interactive video training extensively during the initial rollout of the proposed changed mission. Follow up by continuing regular programs focusing on customer service, and organizational goals relating to customer satisfaction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get The Right People In The Right Jobs 	
HP01.1	Over the long term change how the IRS selects, trains, evaluates, rewards and supports its employees so they can better serve customers.
HP01.2	Define measurable technical and behavioral skills for all IRS positions.
HP01.3	Offer a pre-qualification test for interested employees.
HP01.4	Create a diverse pool of qualified candidates scored against needed skills.
HP01.5	Make selections for vacancies from a pool of pre-qualified internal applicants when vacancies occur.
HP01.6	Apply existing technical and behavioral skills for all Customer Service Representative selections.
HP01.7	Develop and apply technical and behavioral skills for managerial, non-bargaining unit, and executive selections.
HP01.8	Develop and apply technical and behavioral skills for all other bargaining unit positions.
HP01.9	Use a pre-employment screening assessment tool, based on technical and behavioral skills, for all external applicants.
HP01.10	Use behavioral interviews to screen external applicants for positions in IRS.
HP01.11	Use pre-employment screening and testing of skills in hiring, starting with customer service personnel.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
HP01.12	Develop competencies for all other occupations where the IRS anticipates hiring or selecting.
HP02.9	Use Internet technology to reach out to future employees by sharing IRS competency needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster A Family-Friendly Workplace 	
HP17.1	To the maximum extent possible, make child care more affordable for IRS employees.
HP17.2	Allow more employees to use flexible hours.
HP17.3	To the maximum extent possible, expand flexiplace or telecommuting arrangements within budgetary and regulatory constraints.
HP17.4	Solicit more employee feedback about current family-friendly programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create An Ideas Advocate 	
HP12.1	The IRS should, within current resources, create an Ideas Advocate who will communicate directly with the Commissioner regarding "Ideas Advocate" issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get The Customer Service Message Out 	
HP11.5	Roll out Corporate Education's Leadership Department course entitled "Leading Empowered Workgroups" to all managers to facilitate the movement of decision-making to the front line.
HP11.6	Roll out the "Leading Empowered Workgroups" course to all employees.
HP13.2	Use all available forms of communication including the Voice Messaging System, IRS Intranet, bulletin boards, interactive video teleconferencing, and paper products to communicate quarterly reports on IRS performance to all employees.
HP15.1	Before the end of the 1998 filing season, have an intensive organization-wide special training program. This program will introduce to employees the new approach to customer service.
HP15.2	Develop an annual IRS-wide customer service orientation for all IRS employees.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TASK FORCE

Listing Of Actions

Action #	Description of Action
<i>HP15.3</i>	Create a customer service brochure to highlight and communicate the customer service expectations of its employees.
<i>HP15.4</i>	Use the IRS Intranet to reinforce a consistent customer service message.
<i>CM05.1</i>	Centralize oversight and implementation authority for major communicators initiatives.
<i>CM05.2</i>	Improve national distribution of information to IRS employees.

Contacting The IRS

Problem Resolution Day: 1-800-829-1040

If you have questions regarding Problem Resolution Day please call the number above for assistance.

TeleTax: 1-800-829-4477

Call for recorded tax information on over 140 tax topics and for automated refund information.

Forms and Publications: 1-800-829-3676

Order a free copy of IRS forms and publications.

Hearing-Impaired: 1-800-829-4059

Get tax assistance through TTY/TDD equipment.

Tax Assistance: 1-800-829-1040

If you can't answer your own questions by reading the tax form instructions or the free tax publications, call the IRS for assistance.

Internet:

Access the IRS home page to get federal tax forms with instructions, publications, tax law changes, "frequently asked questions," and other tax information for individuals and businesses.

World Wide Web — <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov>

File Transfer Protocol — <ftp.irs.ustreas.gov>

Telnet — <iris.irs.ustreas.gov>

Modem: (703) 321-8020

Federal Tax Forms CD-ROM:

Order CD with current year and prior year tax forms with instructions and tax publications from Government Printing Office's Superintendent of Documents at (202) 512-1800 or through Internet at: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs.

IRS Tax Fax:

From a fax machine, dial (703) 487-4160 and follow voice prompts to get IRS tax forms with instructions and other tax information materials faxed back to you.

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Publication 2197 (3-98)
Catalog Number 25006E

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328
ISBN 0-16-049475-3

